

University of Guelph
Department of Geography

**GEOG*4690 GEOGRAPHY FIELD RESEARCH
TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2012**

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to gain first-hand experience with geographical field research. Students will apply skills acquired through techniques courses within the geography program to investigate topics emphasizing human systems, biophysical processes, as well as their interaction. A ten-day excursion to the Catskills, New York State is scheduled for August 19th to 29th during which students will plan and operationalize their collaborative research projects. They will process, interpret and analyze collected data during the Fall 2012 semester.

ASSESSMENT

Reading synopsis 15% - A course reading pack highlighting the Catskills, New York State will be distributed in May 2012. Students are required to write a 500 word synopsis based on key points and personal areas of interest. Synopsis is due by August 15th 2012.

Field notebook 15% - Students are required to keep a daily log of their research activities and experiences while in the field, including guest lectures, field trips, and data collection. Field notebook is due by September 10th 2012.

Action Plan & Progress Reports 15% - Students are required to develop an action plan for their collaborative research project at the beginning of the field excursion. They will also be required to provide regular progress reports to the class or to the instructors.

Individual Project Report 20% - For this component of the collaborative research project, each student must compile an eight-page report detailing their part of the project. They must provide information on the problem/rationale for the project, its methodology, summary of data collected, and analytical highlights.

Group Analysis 25% - For this component of the collaborative research project, students must work together in assigned groups to weave together their individual reports into a broader analysis of human systems, biophysical processes, and human-environment interactions. The analysis will be no longer than twenty pages.

Group Presentation 10% - For this component of the collaborative research project, students must present their group analysis detailed above and receive feedback from the class as a whole before it is submitted for final assessment.

REQUIREMENTS

To enroll in Geog4690, students must (a) have completed 12.5 credits; (b) be majors in one of Earth Surface Science, Environmental Geoscience and Geomatics, Environmental Governance, Geography and B.Sc.(Env.) Environment and Resource Management with a cumulative overall average of 70% at time of registration for Fall 2012 courses.

To participate in Geog4690, students must (a) hold a valid passport for travel to the United States (or proof of eligibility for USA entry); (b) purchase health and travel insurance; (c) sign travel release forms; (d) sign a contract of conduct; (e) complete and provide proof of travel tutorial from Centre for International Programs for the field excursion portion of the course. Photocopies (of passport/travel documents; insurance coverage) and signed originals (of travel release; contract of conduct; CIP tutorial forms) must be submitted to the instructors by August 15th 2012.

Students must provide a deposit of \$300.00 by February 29th 2012 and the remaining balance (TBA) by April 15th 2012. Cheques should be made out to the Department of Geography, University of Guelph. Partial or full refunds are not possible except in extenuating circumstances.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

The approximate cost of the Catskills field excursion (August 19th-29th) will be between \$1000 and \$1500 per student. This includes transportation (van rental & fuel costs), accommodation (10 nights at Red Carpet Inn in Oneonta NY), and incidentals (e.g. tourist site fees, selected meals). Budget will be confirmed once deposits are received.

Students will be responsible for the majority of their own meals (inn rooms are equipped with a fridge and microwave; inn grounds include BBQ facilities). They will also be responsible for printing costs of course materials (e.g. available through CourseLink).

To help with travel costs, you may wish to apply to the following travel grants:

Deadline: FEBRUARY 1st

- Grants for Undergraduate Experiential Learning \$500-1000
- Latornell Undergraduate Travel Grants [T0058] \$1000
- Hungerford Undergraduate Travel Scholarships [T4508] \$1000
- University of Guelph Travel Scholarships [T0421] \$1500

Deadline: APRIL 1st

- Kiyoko Miyanishi International Travel Grant [T0742] \$3500

Deadline: MAY 15th

- Wardlaw Travel Grant [T0665] \$1000
- Geography Field Trip Travel Grant [T0584] \$400

[Details for majority of above awards found in Undergraduate Calendar:

http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c09/sec_d0e16496.shtml]

[Details for GUEL at: <http://www.theresearchshop.ca/news/grants-undergraduate-experiential-learning-guel-deadline-february-1>]